

Remarks

Claims 1-19 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 10-12 have been amended. No new matter is believed added.

Claims 17-19 are allowed. Claims 5-8, 10, and 13-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

Claims 1-4, 9, and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Srinivasan et al. (US 6,418,042), hereafter "Srinivasan." This rejection is defective because Srinivasan fails to disclose each and every feature as required by 35 U.S.C. 102(e).

Independent claim 1 recites:

"An apparatus for reading out multiple match hits from a content addressable memory (CAM), comprising:
a priority encoder for receiving a plurality of matchlines from a CAM and for sequentially encoding addresses of the CAM that are associated with the

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matchlines that indicate a match; and

a matchline mask system for selectively masking off a matchline that indicates a match from the priority encoder after the address associated with that matchline is encoded by the priority encoder."

Srinivasan fails to disclose the claimed priority encoder "for receiving a plurality of matchlines from a CAM and for sequentially encoding addresses of the CAM that are associated with the matchlines that indicate a match." On the contrary, Srinivasan discloses a conventional priority encoder 116 for determining the highest priority match address from the comparison, for outputting the match address, and for generating a multiple match flag signal if there is at least two matches between the comparand data and data stored in the CAM array (see, e.g., col. 9, lines 45-60). Independent claim 11 includes a similar feature.

Accordingly, since Srinivasan fails to disclose each and every claim feature, Applicants submit that claims 1-19 are allowable.

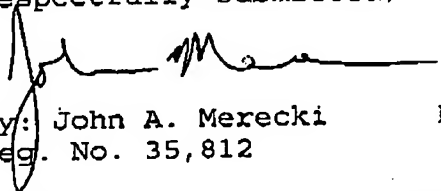
If the Examiner believes that any further discussion of the invention would be helpful, perhaps in the form of an Examiner's Amendment, Applicants' representative is

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available at (518) 449-0044, and earnestly solicits such discussion.

Respectfully submitted,


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